SEPARATIST MODEL: COMPARE AND CONTRAST BETWEEN
THE MALAY MUSLIMS OF SOUTHERN THAILAND
AND THE MOROS OF SOUTHERN PHILIPPINE

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The majority of conflicts around the world involve some type of internal warfare including insurgency. Most of these are separatist insurgencies. Typically, these insurgencies lack the size of population to try and overthrow the government. Instead, they seek to maintain the identity of the group, its culture, and religion. When such groups feel that their identity is severely threatened, they may use violence to try to change government policy and operations. Success for a separatist insurgency is obtaining institutionalized protection of its identity through negotiated settlement, semi-autonomy, autonomy, or full independence. This thesis identified four factors that generally must be present for separatist insurgents to achieve that success in protecting the group identity. These four factors are identity, ressentiment, mobilization, and will. These four factors were the basis for examining separatist insurgencies by comparing and contrasting the Malay Muslims of southern Thailand and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) of the Philippines. The Thai Malay Muslim insurgency has stalled and any serious challenge to the Bangkok government diminished due its inability to organize effectively and define its political objectives. However, recently the Thai government has started a dialogue with one insurgent group in Malaysia. The MILF's stronger organization and clearer objectives led to negotiations with the Philippine government. Of the two, the MILF insurgency has had more international attention and pressure. The four factors are indicative of the relative success of these two separatist insurgencies.

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ABSTRACT

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ACRONYMS

ARMM	Autonomous Regions in Muslim Mindanao
BRN-C	Barisan Revolusi Nasional–Coordinate (National Revolution Front–Coordinate)
COIN	Counterinsurgency
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Counterinsurgency is not just thinking man's warfare—it is the graduate level of war.

— Special Forces Officer in Iraq, 2005,
U. S. Army Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*

The majority of conflicts around the world involve some type of insurgency. Since 1996, of the 40 conflicts, 16 were separatist insurgencies (Spencer 1998, 18). Many countries have come about as a result of a separatist insurgency. For example, East Timor broke away from Indonesia in 1999, Kosovo away from Serbia in 2008, and South Sudan away from Sudan in 2011 (Spencer 1998, 19). Separatism is a form of insurgency. These insurgencies are common everywhere around the world. Almost every continent has had some kind of separatist insurgency. Spencer states, "It is difficult to determine just how widespread separatist [insurgencies] have become" (Spencer 1998, 29). In North America, these separatist insurgencies have taken place in Canada, Mexico, and the United States. In Africa, they occurred in Algeria, Mali, Nigeria, and Angola. In Europe, they took place in Balkans (Spencer 1998, 29). These conflicts are unavoidable and will continue to propagate into the next millennia.

Movement in this study is defined as either a passive or active political organization aimed at obtaining insurgent political goals. Some characteristics of a movement are: core members serving as part of or as the nucleus; sporadic violence and not a central or planned activity; common ideology; personnel are primarily politically focused. Some examples are the Quebec, Canada; Scotland, United Kingdom; and Catalonia, Spain. Insurgency is defined by United States Army Field Manual 3-24 as "an

organized, protracted politico-military struggle designed to weaken the control and legitimacy of an established government, occupying power, or other political authority while increasing insurgent control" (Department of the Army 2006, 1-1). The distinguishing feature of an insurgency from a movement is its armed militant organization and orientation to violence as well as criminal, illegal activity. The Department of Defense definition is mainly focused on national insurgencies seeking the overthrow of the national government and addresses that most dangerous threat; the more common type of insurgency in this study is only partially addressed. The rest of the study will focus on separatist insurgency, which are those organizations that have armed groups that engage in illegal and violent activities.

This study is only focused on separatist insurgencies, which are those insurgent groups that seek greater autonomy or to break away from the rest of the country. Separatist insurgency is a distinct form of revolutionary warfare where insurgents are not trying to overthrow the government, but seek to maintain the identity of the group, its culture, language, and religion. Typically, these insurgencies state that they seek to break away from the government to achieve independence. However, some separatist insurgencies do not necessarily want to achieve independence because of the heavy burdening responsibilities and costs associated with being a separate country (Spencer 1998, 29). Instead they may settle for autonomy or semi-autonomy. Success in a separatist insurgency is defined as obtaining the desired institutionalized protection or autonomy; that protection may be obtained by a negotiated settlement, official autonomy, or even independence. Every inhabited continent has these types of conflicts which generally seek some aspect of separatism.

States normally have many means to deal with these insurgencies. They usually employ internal diplomatic (political) measures, police, and military forces to counter insurgent violence and address grievances as required. Often, though, these states may not have the necessary or adequate capacity, let alone know-how, to properly resolve these types of conflicts. Insurgents also suffer similar challenges as they must be able to organize and articulate their demands in order to find a resolution of their grievances. This gap in states' ability to resolve these types of separatist insurgencies and their increasing prevalence throughout the world has the potential to impact global power brokers such as the United States. As the world further becomes more interconnected through globalization, more and more countries will have national or regional interests in areas that have these types of conflicts. An examination of separatist insurgencies may provide better understanding into these conflicts as well as shape policy. Currently, the United States' policies and doctrine generally deal with separatist insurgencies by declaring it as an internal issue and encourage a peaceful resolution of the conflict (Department of the Army 2006, 1-1). Any kind of involvement would only be as advisors, trainers, or support to the stability of the state government. This kind of support can be better guided based clearer understanding.

This study aims to increase the understanding of separatist insurgencies by identifying and developing the successful factors of such an insurgency type. After that identification, these factors will be applied, compared, and contrasted in two continuing separatist insurgencies, the Malay Muslims of southern Thailand and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) on the southern island of Mindanao in the Philippines. As a separatist insurgency strives to achieve its political aspirations, what is success

specifically for these two insurgencies? There is a ceiling of possible recruits for their insurgency. It is not necessarily about winning autonomy or gaining statehood. The ambitious endstates may be a goal for the Thai Malays and Mindanao Muslims but ultimately they are willing to settle for less. According to well known ethnic group experts, Ted Robert Gurr and Barbara Harff, this type of insurgency is "a distinction between peoples who want separation or autonomy from the states that rule them" (Gurr and Harff 1994, 21). The primary research question is what current factors determine a successful separatist insurgency. Some of the secondary research questions that will be addressed in later chapters are about how success is measured, about what success will be for each of these cases, and what internal and external support are necessary for that success, and how organized are these insurgencies to achieve success.

Ethnicity is a significant factor to consider in both of these insurgencies. It is defined as a collective ancestry, which usually carries innate traits used for basing ethnic identity and affiliation such as a common religion, customs, language, race, kinship, and assumed blood ties. The group shares a common sense of belonging and affiliation through kinship bonds and forms of tribalism, parochialism, or communalism organizations (Bowman 2006, 3). Group members are born into their specific ethnic group. Separatist insurgencies have their own political goals. However, those goals could be achieved more easily by framing the conflict as ethnic in nature.

After addressing group composition, some background is needed on insurgency by highlighting military doctrine and some of the notable counterinsurgency (COIN) publications as a basis for study. Two other widely used or known references in dealing with insurgencies are the Joint Publication 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, and David Galula's

Counter-Insurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice. Though Field Manual 3-24,

Counterinsurgency, is oriented on the Army, its strategy specifically focuses on the

military as a whole; it is also older than the joint publication and is authoritative, taking

precedence over the Army manual. These two publications are mentioned here to provide

some contextual background information as to why not much information is provided on

how to deal with separatist insurgencies. Neither manual defines a separatist insurgency

clearly.

      Joint Publication 3-24 says, "Insurgency is the organized use of subversion and

violence by a group or movement that seeks to overthrow or force change of a governing

authority. Insurgency can also refer to the group itself" (Joint Chiefs of Staff 2009, I-1).

The doctrine manual further says ends, scope, and core grievances are three of the most

important aspects of an insurgency. The only section that mentions a separatist movement

is in section I-1 on change. The manual points out that "many insurgencies center on

forcing the Host Nation (HN) into significant political or economic change. This change

can have multiple forms. Change can include issues such as political processes, religious

practices, or secession of a region."

      While in David Galula's *Counter-Insurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice,* the

closest definition is a revolutionary war as primarily an internal conflict, although

external influences seldom fail to bear upon it. Revolution, plot (or *coup d'état*), and

insurgency are the three ways to take power by force. A revolution is characterized as an

unplanned and unforeseen cataclysm, which can be scrutinized afterwards (Galula 2006,

2). A plot is the clandestine action of an insurgent group directed at the overthrow of the

top leadership in its country. Because of its clandestine nature, a plot cannot and does not

involve the masses. Separatist is defined as creating a new political group or faction out of an existing political group within a "sovereign" country (McHenry 2007, 10). This new group would have constitutional authority equivalent to that of the existing group. In both the Thai Malays and Moros Muslims, it refers to seeking to create a new state out of an old state. This may be their politically stated goal but realistically, they are willing to negotiate for anything short of it so long as their identity, culture, language, and religion are protected. They also consist of a large collective that occupy a large territory with a common ethnicity, religion, or language (McHenry 2007, 11). Its membership is exclusively natives, geographically concentrated, and composed of polarized ethnie with shared values and views; not dependent on cause or convincing. These two sources will be the basis of the defined scope of analysis of the Thai Malay and Moros separatist insurgencies.

Some relevant assumptions used in this study to derive observations are based on what conditions exist currently in these two areas of focus and that they will remain the same for the foreseeable future. Though relevant and current information may be included, the study will not aim to be all inclusive of recent changes in both Thailand and the Philippines. Some assumptions used on the Malay Muslim study are; that the conditions in Thailand stay relatively stable in the near future, the Malaysian government's attitude toward conflict stays the same, and Islamic extremists still do not have an influential foothold on the insurgency. Additionally, support for the Thai Malay Muslims maintains its status quo. On the other hand, some assumptions on the MILF study include no change in political conditions of their organization, and support and

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recognition of the MILF in the Philippines does not change. The secondary sources used are substantially accurate. These assumptions are necessary to ensure study continuance.

This study is limited to a specific time period and focuses on certain key points in each insurgency. The primary time frame for this study is from September 11, 2001 to April 1, 2013. The author will primarily focus on specific and key information needed and will only follow a chronological analysis for some of the history. Some of this information may not cover both insurgencies evolution over such a large span of time.

Some background information on the two ethnic groups that will set the conditions for understanding the derivation of the factors necessary for a successful separatist insurgency, and application of the hybrid separatist model factors in later chapters. Historical perspectives and chronology will be covered here and not in later chapters. The format for the overview is significant historical or key events, key players or organizations roles, and government's policies that contributed to enflaming the insurgency. The first overview is the Thai Malay Muslim followed directly by the MILF.

Several significant historical and key events contributed to the root cause of the Thai Malay Muslim insurgency in southern Thailand. The current southernmost region of Thailand was not originally part of its territory. The Thai government took control of the area after the Anglo-Siamese Treaty of 1909 from the British and divided it into seven provinces to control the region and Muslims (Melvin 2007, 12; Yegar 2002, 93). This area was previously known as Patani. It was an independent kingdom until 1786 when Siam (modern-day Thailand) recaptured it. Known previously as the Kingdom of Langkasuka, its name changed to the kingdom of Patani in the 14th century. At that time, it was the trade center of Asia and Europe (Islam 1998, 443). Hinduism and Buddhism

were practiced until the 15th century. The religion of Islam spread throughout the area between the 12th and 15th centuries with trade activities. The King of Patani himself converted to Islam and made it an Islamic state in 1457 (Islam 1998, 443).

Four of the key events demonstrate the relationship between the Thai Muslim Malays in the south and the Thai government. Generally, over the first five decades the Thai Malays suffered from the Thai government's oppressive policies (Melvin 2007, 1). In 1948, the government declared a state of emergency, an act that reinforced the southern Thai Muslim perception of the Thai nation as an "alien state" (Islam 1998, 446). Another key contributory event to the insurgency was the Dusun Nyiur incident in which Haji Sulong, President of the Islamic Religious Council, was arrested in the late 1940s which led to violence between the Thai police and the Thai Malay Muslims (Aphornsuvan 2004, 9). The third and fourth events are contemporary ones and most important to current attitudes. On April 28, 2004 there was a stand-off at the Krue-Se Mosque in southern Thailand and on October 25, 2004 after demonstrations at Tak Bai, over 100 men were arrested and then suffocated due to being stacked on top of each other while being transported by truck (Melvin 2007, 2). Overall, the incidents reinforced current attitudes of distrust and resentment towards the government; this added to the desire of the people to separate from the Thai state and government.

Some key players or organizations have played a crucial role in impacting the Thai Malay Muslim insurgency. The first person that may have played a key role to the insurgency resurgence is former Prime Minister Thaksin. His policies while prime minister exacerbated the insurgency when it was at its lowest point between 2004 and 2005. Thaksin changed out personnel in the South as well as key military leaders in

southern Thailand in 3 years (Melvin 2007, 30). The next person is Haji Sulong who

made seven demands of the Thai government in response to its assimilationist policies.

> (1) the 'appointment of a single individual with full powers to govern the four [Patani] provinces . . . this individual to be local-born in one of the four provinces . . . and to be elected by the people;' (2) 80% of government servants in those provinces to profess the Muslim religion; (3) Malay and Siamese to be the official languages; (4) Malay to be the medium of instruction in the primary schools; (5) Islamic law to be recognized and enforced in a separate Muslim court other than the civil court; (6) any revenue and income derived from the four provinces to be utilized within them; and (7) the formation of a Muslim Board. (Islam 1998, 444)

The quote above highlights Sulong's demands of the Thai government and shows the

degree of their grievances as well as his courage to face persecution, which inspired other

Thai Malay Muslims to follow. Following him is Tengku Abdul Jalal, who in 1959

formed an underground organization, Gurr and Harff (or Patani National Liberation

Front), supported by traditional aristocrats as well as the religious elite (Liow 2006, 30).

The various Patani organizations are: the *Barisan Revolusi Nasional-Coordinate* (or

National Revolution Front-Coordinate) (BRN-C), *Barisan Revolusi Nasional-Kongres*,

Patani United Liberation Organization, *Gerakan Mujahidin Islam Patani (*or Patani

Islamic Mujahidin Movement), and the Islamic Liberation Front of Patani. The most

powerful is the BRN-C. Though the Thai Malays may share some similarities with the

Malays of Malaysia, Malaysians do not necessarily see eye to eye on the insurgency

(Yegar 2002, 178). Minimal international reaction towards the violence in southern

Thailand has also played a crucial role. So far there has not been any evidence showing

that the Indonesian terrorist group *Jemaah Islamiyah*, Al Qaeda, and others have had any

hold or influence in southern Thailand (Abuza 2011, 27). The insurgency seems faceless

because many of the attacks have gone unclaimed by any of these organizations; even if

it was done by one or more of them. The *Barisan Revolusi Nasional* (or National

Revolution Front) has signed an agreement with the Thai government to hold talks (Sithraputhran and Grudgings 2013, 1). Hopefully, this group can step up and become the single central entity the Thai Malay Muslims need.

The Thai government's policies have also contributed to the insurgency. Historically, the government implemented measures to weaken the Islamic identity of the people through Siamese Law, requiring all children to attend Siamese primary schools (Islam 1998, 443). Mandatory integration by the government created serious resentment and led to violence. Nevertheless, many Thai Malay Muslim groups tried politically to demand a change in the Thai government's policy. The government replaced the Islamic Shariah and traditional laws with Siamese Law (Islam 1998, 443). In 1921, the government changed laws requiring all children to attend Thai primary schools and institutions with secular education and Thai language (Melvin 2007, 13). Additionally, the seven provinces were reorganized into three provinces, Patani, Yala, and Narathiwat, as well as replacing the local rulers with Thai governors. These changes led to the loss of political power of the traditional aristocrats. The government then passed the Thai Customs Decree prohibited the "wearing of sarongs, the use of Malay [Muslim] names and the Malay language," which angered the Thai Malay Muslims (Islam 1998, 444). Eventually, the provincial and local governments came under the direct control of Bangkok. These policies were designed to integrate Thai Malay Muslims into Thai society but only made them more resentful. The government's approach changed with every new regime. In 1961 the Thai Customs Decree was repealed allowing pondok schools to continue provided they offered both secular and Islamic education. The Thai Malay Muslims were also allowed to keep Muslim names (Islam 1998, 447). Special

privileges were also given to Muslims including admissions to the universities and government bureaucracy, the establishment of National and Provincial Councils for Islamic Affairs, study tours to Bangkok for Muslims at government expense, and the creation of the position of *chularajmontri*, or state councilor, for Islamic Affairs (Melvin 2007, 14). Finally, the government initiated massive economic projects to construct roads, schools, colleges, and universities in the Muslim majority provinces. Rubber plantation owners were given incentives to replace old trees with a high-yield variety. Not all of these government programs were viewed positively by Muslims. Instead, many perceived such measures as tricks of the Thai government to penetrate their culture, economy, and society. Even with the new accommodation policies, the guerilla operations continued (Islam 1998, 448). The government's policy failed to empower moderate Muslim leaders. The reforms were not adequate enough to resolve conflict. The conflict was not a priority for the government. Stability in Thai politics can help the Thai government implement and sustain a comprehensive policy towards resolving the conflict in the south (Abuza 2011, 26).

The MILF has had many significant historical and key events which contributed to their insurgency in southern Philippines. Some significant historical events prior to the MILF are provided in order to give the larger Moros perspective. One significant event that spawned the Moro insurgency was the 1968 Jabaidah massacre which led to the formation of the Muslims (Mindanao) Independence Movement (Liow 2006, 10). This opened the doors for other Muslims to organize into groups. The group soon broke apart when many of its followers believed some were coopted and its top leaders were offered high positions in the government (Islam 1998, 449). Those that left formed the militant

Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). Due to hostilities, martial law was instituted in 1972 and the MNLF had to move underground. Another key event for the Moro insurgency was the Tripoli Agreement, December 23, 1976 (IHS Jane's 2012, 24). This event brought the legitimacy of their cause to the international Muslim community and garnered the Organization of the Islamic Conference and Muslim states' involvement. The most significant event to the MILF was their formation in 1977 when they split from the more secular MNLF. In 1986, the Philippine government established the Autonomous Regions in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) as a measure of its willingness to address the insurgency (Islam 1998, 450). However, only four of the 13 provinces were granted autonomy. Through talks and negotiations, the MNLF and Philippine government in 1996 agreed to form Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development under MNLF for 3 years (IHS Jane's 2012, 2). In 1997, the government entered into formal peace talks with MILF and on July 18, 1997, both sides came into Agreement for the General Cessation of Hostilities (Islam 1998, 451; IHS Jane's 2012, 29). From 1997 to 2000 the MILF expanded of its camps and civilian populations under its control (IHS Jane's 2012, 24). After more than four decades of hostilities, both the MILF and Philippine government agreed to a Malaysian mediated talk on April 24, 2012 regarding the "10 Decision Points on Principles," in which a "sub-state" would be established to replace the ARMM for ethnic Moro Muslims in Mindanao (IHS Jane's 2012, 10). This agreement led to other negotiations. On August 5, 2011, President Benigno Aquino III met directly with MILF chairman Ebrahim el Haj Murad in Tokyo to try to negotiate peace with the country's main insurgent groups (IHS Jane's 2012, 10). These sessions were followed up in the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur throughout mid-2012 and

resulted in the Philippine government and MILF agreeing to the terms of a preliminary framework peace agreement on October 7. The framework agreement was successfully signed during a ceremony in Manila on October 15 (IHS Jane's 2012, 10). These significant events spanned almost one generation to arrive at what seems to be a fragile agreement.

Many key MILF players and organizations have played a crucial role in their insurgency. Nur Misuari was credited with leading the first organization, the MNLF, through this insurgency. His differences with some of his followers drove Salamat Hashim, supported by ethnic Maguindanaos and Muslims from Mindanao, to split from the more secular MNLF. The next key player is MILF leader Murad Ibrahim, Salamat's long time deputy and vice-chairman for military affairs. Ebrahim el Haj Murad assumed leadership of the organization upon his death (IHS Jane's 2012, 2). Murad was a student in Mindanao when he quit joining the MNLF at the age of 22. He also trained in Libya as one of "Batch 300," before returning to central Mindanao (IHS Jane's 2012, 21). A key organization and player that is still a factor in this insurgency is the MILF splinter faction the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters, under the leadership of rogue MILF commander Ameril Umbra Kato. Not much is known about the control or influence the Moros has over the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters. Lastly, these personnel have worked hard to resolve this conflict: Philippine President Benigno Aquino III, Muslim states, and Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak. All of these key players and organizations have contributed to resolving the MILF insurgency in southern Philippines.

The Filipino government's policies have also contributed to the insurgency. The Filipino government, like the colonial administration before it, passed laws legitimizing

its expropriation of lands traditionally owned by the Muslim population for resettlement projects and plantation agriculture (Islam 1998, 448; Liow 2006, 7). The government designed a "control model" to integrate and assimilate the Moros (Islam 1998, 452). The government's repressive measures encouraged the migration of Christian population into Mindanao. By the 1960s, many Moros lost their lands to the influx of Catholic settlers from northern and central Philippines which made the Moros a minority (Liow 2006, 7). These policies contributed to the violent clashes between Catholics and local Muslims over terms of the natural and mineral resources' exploitation for the benefit of northern Philippines (IHS Jane's 2012, 8). The government thought that by diminishing the wealth of the Moros, their nationalist movement would collapse in the long run. The policy only made the Moros more aggressive (Islam 1998, 452). All these policies and laws by the Philippine have contributed to the MILF insurgency.

The basis of this study is determining what factors contribute to successful separatist insurgencies by examining two models, in order to derive four common factors and arrive at a new, third model of separatism to apply to the Thai Malay Muslims of southern Thailand and the MILF of southern Philippines. These two models were chosen for their expertise and specific articulation of separatism. The study is focused on finding what success means to separatist insurgencies that say they are seeking independence or statehood but really would settle for protection of their identity, religion, culture, and language. The study aims to expand knowledge of where military doctrine and policy gap exists for addressing these types of conflicts.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Separatist insurgencies are one category of insurgencies. These types of conflicts are predominantly common around the world, although many sources do not have a prescribed way to deal with it other than declaring it is simply, an internal state issue. Within the group of insurgencies there are sub-categories. One of these sub-categories is labeled a separatist insurgency. This study aims to increase the understanding of separatist insurgency by identifying and examining the current factors of these types of conflicts by comparing and contrasting the two insurgencies of the Malay Muslims of southern Thailand and the MILF of the southern Philippines. A separatist insurgency is a distinct form of revolutionary warfare where insurgents are not trying to overthrow the government, but seek to break off a geographical area and form their own governance over it. As an insurgency strives to achieve their endstate, what current factors determine success for a separatist movement?

This chapter will lay out trends on separatism and highlight the most pertinent scholarly journals used for this research. A review of some of the experts in the areas of separatism illustrates some patterns, similarities, and differences among the different sources. The chapter concludes with details of two sample models of separatist insurgency that will serve as the basis behind the third model for the two case studies in chapter 3. Though many sources were cross referenced, these reviews only highlight pertinent and relevant sources.

Another key term utilized in this chapter to help characterize separatist insurgencies is "ethnie." Ethnie is defined as a collective of members sharing common

traits such as language, religion, customs, institutions, laws, folklore, architecture, dress, food, music and arts, and color. Some characteristics include distinguishing culture and identity separating them from outsiders, history, shared memories, traditions, and even geographic location of the group (Smith 2009, 25-26; Lyon 2013, 1-5). This term may help clarify the ambiguity of these types of insurgencies.

Some categorizations of separatist groups will provide background information as the scope is narrowed to these two ethnic groups. This will further elaborate on the dynamics of ethnic separatist insurgencies. Separatist insurgencies have different distinct categories of people involved depending on their motivations. The four types of groups are categorized by authors Gurr and Harff as ethnonationalists, indigenous, communal contenders, and ethnoclasses. The two categorization types that best describe the two ethnic groups most accurately in this study of separatist insurgency are, ethnonationalists and indigenous categories (Gurr and Harff 1994, 20). While the communal contenders and ethnoclasses groups, which stride for "greater access or participation within existing states" do not describe nor mirror these study groups and will not be explained in detail. In this research, the focus is on ethnonationalists and indigenous groups.

The ethnonationalist groups are independent and want to reestablish their own state, while an indigenous group primarily seeks to ensure the protection of traditional lands, resources, and culture (Gurr and Harff 1994, 18). Ethnonationalist groups are large and regionally concentrated ethnies that live within the boundaries of one state; their modern political movements are directed toward achieving greater autonomy or independent statehood. Most groups' historical traditions of autonomy or independence are used to justify these contemporary demands. In some cases autonomy was lost

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centuries ago. More than 80 groups of people identified supported movements to establish greater political autonomy (Gurr and Harff 1994, 24). Thirty of these groups fought wars for national independence or for unification with kindred groups elsewhere since the end of World War II. Aspiring nationalists live in the third world, such as the southern Sudanese, the Palestinians and Kurds in the Middle East, and the Tibetans. These groups have fought some of the modern world's most persistent wars of secession, but few have won political independence. These types of "wars for national independence attract military and political support from nearby states, stimulate similar movements in adjoining countries, and are the main source of international refugees" (Gurr and Harff 1994, 19). Major international powers contained these struggles through diplomatic support of negotiations, delivering humanitarian assistance, and peacekeeping forces.

The other type is an indigenous group that is concerned about autonomy issues but differ from ethnonationalists (Gurr and Harff 1994, 20). They are the descendants of the original inhabitants of conquered or colonized regions. Most live close to the land as subsistence farmers, herders, or hunters. Few had political organization, identity, or purpose. They faced severe political and economic pressures. Many outsiders have conquered and ruled over them without their consent resulting in the loss of traditional lands and resources to settlers and developers (Gurr and Harff 1994, 26). Their goal is the protection of their language and way of life from what their advocates call ethnocide, the destruction of their culture or culture genocide, and seek to regain as much control as possible over their lands and resources. These descriptions are generally broad and are not meant to be an exact mold of the Malay and Moro Muslim insurgencies. It is only a categorization.

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In almost every journal or resource available on this topic, there is a historical background provided on both the Malay Muslims of southern Thailand and the MILF of the southern Philippines. History is inherently very significant to both case studies and compliments the rationale for these two insurgencies. Many sources shared similarities in explaining the scope of the insurgencies as well as offering perspectives on differences and similarities of both insurgencies. Some sources, though, are somewhat outdated such as Moshe Yegar's, *Between Integration and Secession: The Muslim Communities of the Southern Philippines, Southern Thailand, and Western Burma/Myanmar* and William M. Carpenter and David G. Wiencek's *Asian Security Handbook: An Assessment of Political-Security Issues in the Asia-Pacific Region*. These general overviews provided adequate background information but are not as relative to the current operational environments of these areas. Others such as Pierre Le Roux's, "To be or not to be. . . .: The Cultural Identity of the Jawi (Thailand)" and Astri Suhrke's, "Loyalists and Separatists: The Muslims in southern Thailand" offered different and diverging perspectives on the insurgency. Overall, these sources demonstrated a pattern of external perspective on these two insurgencies.

In "The Islamic Independence Movements in Patani of Thailand and Mindanao of the Philippines," Syed Serajul Islam provides a background on the Malay and the Moro Muslims in Mindanao. This article is most pertinent to this study. It also compares and contrasts separatist insurgencies in the Philippines and southern Thailand. He outlines what motivational factors contribute to the insurgencies, what the government has done to address the insurgent's grievances, why the MILF insurgency in Mindanao is succeeding while the BRN-C in southern Thailand is not, and what factors dictate

success. He believes the Moros are relatively successful because they experienced severe socioeconomic and political deprivations. Islam also explains key organizations involved in the insurgencies. He defines a strong organization as achieving both domestic and foreign support. In both the Patani and Mindanao cases, religion initially helped to form a separate identity but ultimately religious unity did not make a substantial difference to the relative success or failure of these movements. Rather, it was the magnitude of the state's socioeconomic and political intrusions and its repression of minorities that seem to have had much to do with the success of a separatist movement. Islam believes the problem with the Patani Muslim insurgency is that the people are not severely deprived enough by the Thai state; as a result they lack a strong cohesive organization and external supports. Additionally, the Thai policy of integration through accommodation and development may have some limited impact. His perspective is also shared by others and contradicted by some.

The second article, "The Ongoing Insurgency in Southern Thailand: Trends in Violence, COIN Operations, and the Impact of National Politics", by Zachary Abuza, is a study from The Institute for National Strategic Studies, which is a research center for The National Defense University. The study provided insights into the violence of an insurgency that engulfed the three southern-most provinces in Thailand. Abuza summarizes the violence with numbers dead and what means were used. His assessment was that the overall level of violence was influenced more by insurgent calculations, about the optimum amount of violence needed to advance their political goals than by improved capabilities of the security forces. Abuza also points out the human rights abuses by security services with blanket immunity under the Emergency Decree, which

continues to instill mistrust among the local population. Moreover, as long as violence is contained in the deep south, the insurgency will remain a low priority for the new Thai government, which was focused on national political disputes and is reluctant to take on the military by pursuing more conciliatory policies toward the south. He believes that low level violence is likely to continue. The author also provides recommendations for United States policy in Thailand in relation to this insurgency.

The third article by Dr. Neil Melvin, "Conflict in Southern Thailand Islamism, Violence and the State in the Patani Insurgency," seeks to unravel these different strands of the Patani conflict and to shed light on its dynamics. He warns that the insurgents are gaining the upper hand and it will be hard to stop the conflict from escalating. Dr. Melvin believes the insurgency is strengthening and calls for the international community to intervene, besides the expressions of concern that have already come from Thailand's neighbors.

The last two articles are a shift from the Patani to the Mindanao Muslims, to provide background information on the Mindanao Muslim in the southern Philippines. The first article called "The Philippines: Counter-insurgency vs. counter-terrorism in Mindanao" by International Crisis Group, discusses the risk of counter-terror directed against the Abu Sayyaf Group inadvertently pushing them into the arms of the broader insurgencies in Mindanao, the MILF and MNLF. The group recommended the United States and the Philippines revive mechanisms to keep these conflicts apart and refocus on peace processes with these groups. It also points out the impact if this peace process does not lead to a peace agreement by the time the International Monitoring Team mandate ended in August that hostilities could quickly resume. However, a coordination cell,

called the Ad Hoc Joint Action Group, helped facilitate between the Philippines government and the MILF to share intelligence on terrorists and avoid accidental clashes, while government forces pursued the Abu Sayyaf Group. It helped force the Abu Sayyaf Group's core group, including Kadaffy Janjalani and Abu Solaiman, to Sulu, where they were killed. Finally, the group sees the way ahead as a mean of depriving transnational extremists of refuge and regeneration while building confidence with insurgents and strengthening moderates among them. The group argues this mechanism needs to be strengthened and expanded.

The last article, "The Philippines: A New Strategy for Peace in Mindanao?" by the International Crisis Group covers the Pilipino government's experimentation with a creative but risky strategy to bring peace to Mindanao. The group explained the government's three goals: good governance in the ARMM through a two year reform program; bringing separate discussions with two insurgencies, the MNLF and the much larger, better armed MILF together; and hammering out the territory and powers of a future Moro sub-state in peace talks with the MILF. The group thought two scenarios seemed most likely. In one, the MILF remains on the sidelines while the two year caretaker regional administration tries to clean up the ARMM. By including the MNLF among its appointees, the Aquino government would make good on its promise to implement the 1996 agreement and permit it to claim some responsibility for progress made. A final settlement with the MILF would be worked out afterwards. In the second scenario, the government might try to involve the MILF in the ARMM government sooner. In the negotiations, the insurgent organization has long proposed that it run an interim administration until a new, larger, and more autonomous sub-state is created. The

emerging strategy appears to be an attempt to ensure that any future agreement on the territory and powers of an expanded autonomous region would be both legitimate and enforceable. The article proposes many resolutions for the way ahead on the conflict.

Though there is much written about insurgencies and counterinsurgencies, not much is written about the separatist insurgencies of these two areas. Even though categorically it is an insurgency, the separatist insurgency is distinct from others and has not been adequately defined or thoroughly explored. Military doctrine and expert COIN authors lightly touch this subject. The majority of references commonly use historical references for both the Malay Muslims and MILF, providing background or basis of their conflict. Additionally, the majority of the journals written on the subject do not point to one single entity or organization that is in charge of the movement in southern Thailand. On the other hand, most resources clearly note what organization represented the southern Philippine insurgency. The focus of this study is determining current factors of separatist insurgencies using two models that most ideally represent and share similarities with these two insurgencies, to build a third hybrid model consisting of current factors for the separatist model to compare and contrast these two insurgencies. This is the basis for the separatist model in chapter 3.

The first model is Metta Spencer's separatist model. In Metta Spencer's *Separatism: Democracy and Disintegration,* he defines and outlines these separatist examples. Spencer also cites reasons, characteristics, and factors that contribute to a successful separatist movement. This model outlines the sources of National Separatism as: (1) emotional resentment, (2) the justified resistance of victims, (3) propaganda orchestrated for political gain, (4) the power of a dominant ethnic group, (5) economic

motivations, (6) preservation of a threatened culture, and (7) commitment to modernization. Spencer defines emotional resentment, the first part of the model, as "social psychology of nationalism as rooted in an emotional sentiment-including the envy of a rival community, even when the feeling is irrational and baseless" (Spencer 1998, 2). He also uses the French term *ressentiment* categorizing and encompassing forms of resentment or hostility. In this study, resentment is defined as hostility one identifies as the cause of one's frustration and assigns blame for one's frustration. An example of this can be deep rooted resentment, envy and hatred towards the government for past discriminatory policies or exploitations. While the second part, justified resistance of victims, is described as groups rebelling after suffering prolonged violations of their human rights and the denigration of their language, culture, or religion. The third part of this model is propaganda orchestrated for political gain. An example of this is, political leaders stirring up intergroup hatred by propaganda campaigns for their own purposes. The fourth part is the power of a dominant ethnic group. This is nationalistic hatreds to the primacy of an ethnic group in a multicultural state that refuses to share power or privilege on a more egalitarian basis. The fifth part of the model is economic motivations. In this part, the separatist group is portrayed as economically deprived and exploited by the richer part of the population. In part six, separatists believe rightly or mistakenly that they must win independence in order to preserve their religion, language, culture, or other traditions. Lastly, the group's commitment to modernization is the desire to establish a regime that unifies all ethnic or religious communities.

The second model is Boyle's and Englebert's separatist model. The model is based on four factors: (1) economics, (2) cultural heterogeneity, (3) nature and dynamics

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of the political system, and (4) circumstances. An examination of these factors

demonstrates many similarities and differences with other models. This model's factors

broadly characterize this type of insurgency.

The first factor is economics. This factor of secession is as an intrinsic part of

civil conflicts. Separatist regions are different from the rest of the country in terms of

wealth, physical or human capital, or natural resources endowment. Economic policies

from the central state in relation to its regions may affect the costs and benefits of

allegiance or exit. Additionally, a country's overall income level and its economic rate of

growth may contribute to the separatist propensity of its constituent groups. Regional

income and wealth inequalities also influence secession motivations. According to Boyle

and Englebert, poorer regions may feel a greater sense of grievance and blame the state

for their failure to develop, or they may fear competition with their neighbors. Poorer

minorities may also find rebel activity relatively more attractive. Conversely, richer

regions may also become more confident about their future viability as independent

countries or more aware of their group identity. Separatism is often believed to arise from

a "perception of economic injustice," which leads a region to reassess the "relative cost

or benefits of belonging to a national union" (Bookman 1992, 39). This is one factor that

may influence separatists.

The second broad category of this model is cultural heterogeneity. Ethnic,

linguistic and religious heterogeneity is frequently argued to promote secessions.

Government repression of certain cultural groups, even in relatively homogeneous

national environments, also encouraged militants to seek their own political fortunes.

Whether ethnic, linguistic, or religious, numerous scholars have posited that cultural

pluralism within a country will increase the number of secessionist claims. Ethnic diasporas may also contribute to separatist sentiment as they tend to keep grievances alive, offer irredentist support, magnify beliefs in ethnic purity, and provide funding to local organizations. This is a second indicator of separatism.

The third type of factors deals with the nature and dynamics of the political system. The focus is on the political characteristics of entire countries, and not merely the separatist region. Dynamics are unleashed by democratization, discrimination, state failure, and changes in the international environment. The politics of neighboring states and their willingness to support insurgencies would also alter the costs and benefits of separatist activism. Finally, having once had a separate existence as a state, or currently being a separate administrative unit (state, province, etc.), the group may well promote a distinct identity and a desire to "realize" one's political destiny. Heterogeneity by itself is not enough, but groups will opt out when in real danger. When the central state is weakened, overthrown or collapsed, its ability to resist and prevent a secessionist drive is greatly reduced. The logic is twofold. Seeing state provided security as a benefit to members of the state, the group expects that the erosion of this benefit will be conducive to separatism. In the separatism game, though, there are two actors: the rebels and the government. This is the third factor that may impact separatism demands.

The last remaining factor deals with circumstances for separatism. They address specific structures of countries, such as their age, size, and geographical features. The younger a country, the less likely it is to have already passed through the growing pains of nation building and national integration. Thus, the more vulnerable it may be to dismemberment. For example, a positive effect of being a "new state," that is, one within

the first two years of its existence, is the onset of civil wars. In countries whose land masses are non-contiguous and territory is separated by other countries or by water may see their distant component turn more vulnerable to centrifugal forces. The larger a country and its population, the greater its potential for break-up. If other factors are the same, larger populations are more likely to be diverse. There are indications that a positive association exists between population size multiplied by ethnic heterogeneity and state partitions. Indeed, the greater the country's overall population, the more likely each ethnic group is to be large in absolute terms and reach the minimal threshold of size for collective action. They believe that there are scaled benefits for distinct communities to belonging to the state as it increases their social, economic, and educational opportunities. Therefore larger countries offer greater benefits of belonging and should be less likely to produce separatist movements. While this refers to country size more than to population size, these two dimensions should correlate. If both hypotheses are right, they could partly cancel each other out. This is the fourth factor of the Boyle and Englebert separatist model.

Based on the characteristics of these two models as well as other sources, the third hybrid model will contain and integrate some key dominant or prevalent components that are salient to the analysis of separatist insurgencies. These factors generally indicate key aspects of a separatist insurgency. Description of this hybrid model follows in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Separatist insurgencies are a subset of insurgency and are commonly found around the modern world. This type of insurgency is not clearly addressed in United States national policies or military doctrine. A separatist movement entails only a political movement; whereas a separatist insurgency encompasses both a military and political component, with violence as a principal planned activity. Separatist insurgencies generally declare their aim to be autonomy or independence from the government due to grievances based on differences in ethnicity, culture, and religion. A separatist insurgency differs in that its goal is not the overthrow of the central government but is centered on identity and protecting its group survival in that identity. Achievement of the protection of the identity can be achieved by negotiated settlement as well as some form of separation. They are willing to live within another ethnic group as long as their identity is protected and is not perceived to be threatened. Success in a separatist insurgency is defined as obtaining institutionalized protection or autonomy and may include complete independence. This study aims to answer what current factors contribute to successful separatist insurgencies. This chapter combines key components of several known models to describe key factors that make up successful separatist insurgency. Using these metrics as benchmarks, the study will provide a hybrid model from the two examples in chapter 2. These two examples were chosen to be the basis for this study because they were most comprehensive in researching separatist models. Based on these two models, the study will provide its own model for success.

The study is based on two models of separatism to provide means to compare and contrast. These two models were chosen for their specific focus, expertise, and articulation on separatism. The first model is Metta Spencer's separatist model which uses these seven factors: (1) emotional resentment, (2) the justified resistance of victims, (3) propaganda orchestrated for political gain, (4) the power of a dominant ethnic group, (5) economic motivations, (6) preservation of a threatened culture, and (7) commitment to modernization. The second model used is Boyle and Englebert's separatist model. This model outlines four factors that contribute to successful insurgency. These four factors are: (1) economics, (2) cultural heterogeneity, (3) nature and dynamics of the political system, and (4) circumstances. Our hybrid model characterizes four factors: (1) identity, (2) resentment, (3) mobilization, and (4) will. The identity factor was obtained from both models. Resentment comes from both Spencer's and Boyle and Englebert's model. Though, the latter only has some components. It is defined as a categorization of hostility directed at the cause of one's frustration. This can be deep rooted resentment, envy and hatred. The mobilization factor is taken from well known authors in this field of study: Professor Islam, Ted Gurr, Joseph Liow, and Metta Spencer. The "will" factor is derived from both models. These factors are listed in order of importance and represent what most experts on the subject all predominantly point out. Though there are many other factors from other frameworks or models, these four factors historically are found in most successful insurgencies. The sequence is significant because a successful separatist insurgency must possess one factor or an equivalent capability, in order to shift to the next factor in stair-step capability building. The factors are designed to be flexible and only explained sequentially. This helps demonstrate the required flexibility and capability

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of these types of insurgencies. These critical factors are needed for a successful separatist insurgency.
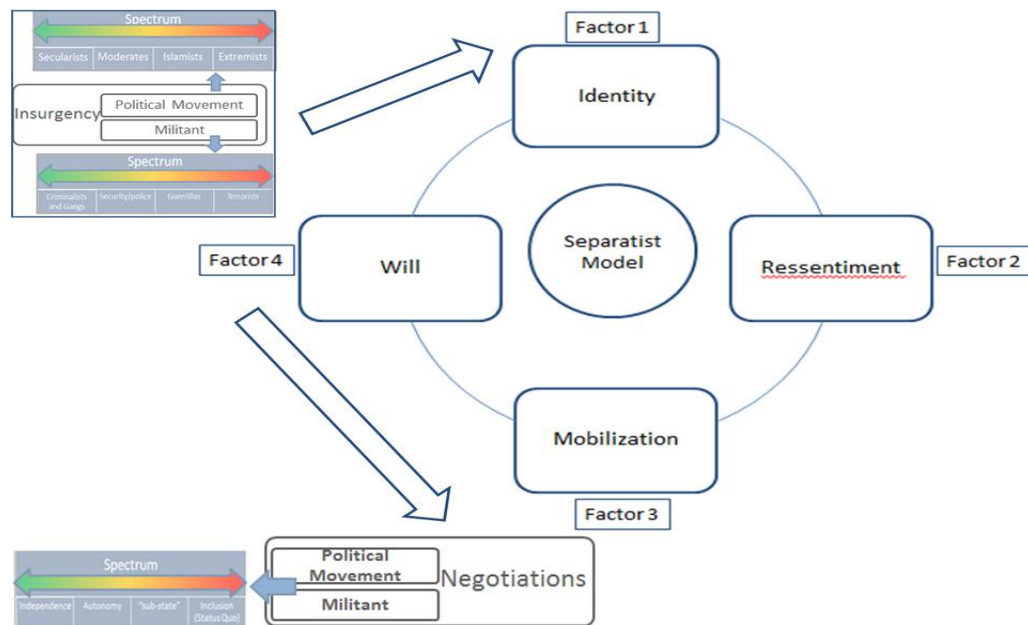
Figure 1.   Separatist Model

Source: Created by author.

The separatist model considers key points from the two other models mentioned above as well as other known models. This third model has four broadening characteristics that a separatist insurgency must have. These groups generally are concentrated in a geographic area, have a common culture, religion, and identity. They usually did not move into the area but are natives to it and have a historical attachment to that specific land. Separatist insurgencies do whatever is necessary to survive as a body and continue their political agenda. It is not a national insurgency but a geographically

concentrated ethnic separatist insurgency. That agenda may change to adapt to the international and internal political environment. Religion is another consideration that may have an effect on achievement of its endstate. The insurgency may need to disassociate with certain groups to avoid being targeted by their enemies in order to maintain its own survivability. It may have to align with other groups. Additionally, they may even be willing to make compromises to welcome more people outside of the core ethnic personnel. Most negotiations between both the government and the separatist are not done in good faith. Sometimes these countries involved in negotiations may have higher national interests and political factors involved in their decision cycle than just resolving an internal conflict. The insurgent group may only negotiate under the auspices of ulterior motives. Many key points were considered for deriving this separatist model.

The first critical factor is the group's identity. Its identity is a force for unifying people. The people of the group are usually polarized and share a common religious affiliation, as well as membership in a clan, tribe, or ethnic group in pursuit of their political interests. Renowned author Ted Robert Gurr describes the identity of separatists as:

> [A]ny collectivity of individuals occupying a common territory. It may or may not be characterized by a common ethnicity, religion or language. Its identity as a group is distinguished from other groups by the centrality of its support for the separatist objective. Its membership is in flux depending upon the impact of events and the persuasiveness of separatist leaders. In addition to support for separatism, the separatist identity may entail a variety of other beliefs supportive of the objective. (Gurr 1993, 10)

Groups whose core members share a distinctive and enduring collective identity based on cultural traits and ways that matter to them and to others with whom they interact. They have a common history, experiences or myths, religious beliefs, language, ethnicity,

region of residence, and customary occupation. They also have a common perception that separates them from other groups. The group's identity is further reinforced by cultural, economic, and political differences with others. For instance, treat a group differently, by denial or privilege, and they are more likely to become more self-conscious about their common bonds and interests (Gurr 1993, 3). They also believe attempts at integration with dominant groups compromise their identity and ability to pursue greater self-determination.

According to the United States Army's COIN doctrine, "some movements may be based on an appeal to a religious identity, either separately from or as part of other identities" (Department of the Army 2006, 1-8). Key components of this factor are: prevalence in modern insurgencies, combined military approach, dual military and political hierarchy, community's involvement with insurgency as a whole, and recruiting (Department of the Army 2006, 1-8). This is the most important factor in a separatist insurgency. The group's identity, religion, culture, and language are the foundation of its struggle. This factor drives the group to pursue the insurgency's political goals. The identity of its members is the primary reason why they are doing what they are doing. Additionally, it is the inspiration and motivation for the insurgency. This factor is critical to the insurgency because it is the core of their insurgency. The people share this commonality. Their interests may be in political, economic, or social inequality. Here, discrimination can have a significant positive effect (Boyle and Englebert 2006, 31). The insurgencies' common identity unifies its entire people under one political direction and purpose. This common political agenda represents the majority of the people. Ensuring common goals, messages, information, and targeting maximizes their efforts. Though

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Muslims are commonly divided by Sunni, Shia, and other sects; the interpretation and implementation of Shariah Law; the specific leaders followed by a group united in faith, they do not always share the same methodology and means to pursue their goals (Yusuf 2007, 21). The group's identity contributes to its ability to communicate effectively the people's will with one voice and direction to attain its ultimate endstate, it is important to the long-term success of a separatist insurgency. These insurgencies must be able to win not only its people but also those whom are geographically co-located, regardless of differences. Some insurgent groups may need other ethnic groups to be strong enough to fight the government; even though they may some differences.

The second factor in this model is resentment (Spencer 1998, 16). This factor's categories include the group's belief or perception that the majority of the people or the national government is a threat and cannot be trusted as well as "suppressed feelings of envy and hatred (existential envy) and the impossibility of satisfying these feelings" (Spencer 1998, 16). The group perceives that its way of life is threatened by the government. Separatist expert and author Metta Spencer best describes this belief as "what all separatist movements have in common is only a conviction that the existing political order is illegitimate and that their group has been assigned to a lower status than it deserves" (Spencer 1998, 15). Whether it is oppressive policies, economic or political discrimination, or resentment, the people believe they are disadvantaged and marginalized (Spencer 1998, 16). Some examples of this are a government's institution of assimilationist policies forcing integration into majority of populace, forced into a government provided education system instead of the group's own system, restrictions on religious practice and language, restrictions on dress wear, and discrimination. This factor

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is critical to the insurgency because it provides motives for the group to take action. These motives do not need to be logical or defendable (Spencer 1998, 16). Without this factor, the insurgency is hollow and meaningless; people will not be motivated enough to care beyond benefits to themselves. For example, the Quebec separatist movement in Canada demonstrated resentment because people willingly accepted greater costs in order to alleviate their feeling as well as perception of humiliation and lack of power to govern themselves (Spencer 1998, 16). In the words of Spencer, perception "is a subjective state of mind not necessarily based on anything substantive" (Spencer 1998, 16). Authors Boyle and Englebert highlighted another example of the power of emotional belief, stating that it includes possessing a "perception of economic injustice," which allows the group to reassess "relative cost or benefits of belonging to a national union" (Boyle and Englebert 2006, 4). The group's perceived threat is crucial to the insurgency regardless of its logic.

The third factor of this model is mobilization (Islam 1998, 451; Gurr 1993, 68; Spencer 1998, 10). This type of insurgency must be able to mobilize its core group. Mobilization activities include political mobilization as in propaganda, recruitment, front and covert party organization, and international activity. These are intended to weaken government control and legitimacy while increasing insurgent control and legitimacy. Violence in terrorist acts and guerrilla warfare may also play a role (Boyle and Englebert 2006, 13). This key factor is crucial to gaining political and social legitimacy. Both insurgents and counterinsurgents seek to win popular support for their cause by trying to sustain that struggle while discouraging support for their adversaries. The means to mobilize popular support are: (1) persuasion, (2) coercion, (3) reaction to abuses,

(4) foreign support, and (5) apolitical motivations (Department of the Army 2006, 1-8). Its political leaders must be able to recruit and expand its power base. Its people must clearly know and support the insurgency and vice versa in order to survive, grow, and counter government COIN operations. Mobilization is defined as the act of assembling and increasing unarmed membership and support as well as forming armed groups and supplying them. This capability allows the organization to exist. According to Boyle and Englebert the ability of an insurgency's leaders to mobilize populations, convincing them to "buy into" the rhetoric, is the driving force in the insurgency (Boyle and Englebert 2006, 7). These factors are critical to maintaining the cause from one generation to another as well as to win the people's support. Recruiting new people may include the use of schools as a base of recruiting, criminal activity to intimidate and influence the populace, garnering external support for the insurgency, a charismatic leader, and an organization structure to support the insurgency. These components enable people, internally and externally, to believe in and follow its goals. The insurgency must also align all its sub-groups and avoid splintering into factions with diverging agendas. Support is critical to separatist insurgencies (Boyle and Englebert 2006, 14). It must have support from its own people and people outside of the organization (ICG 2008, 3). Whether it is financial, military, or sympathy, this support is crucial to gaining non-lethal means such as popularity, political, educational, religious, or even social strength. Support is critical to sustain the insurgency. Strong support also legitimizes the cause and gains political validity in the eyes of locals as well as the international community (ICG 2008, 2). Whether through lethal or non-lethal means, resources allow the group to execute its political and military desires. These insurgencies require continued resources;

a determinant to the group's ability to effectively attain endstates. It can also influence group stability. This factor can be ideas, human capacity to change and adapt, capital, technology, a mechanism ensuring insurgency continuity from one generation to another, natural resource, personnel numbers, or any means to leverage an advantage over the government. Having a natural resource located in the same geographic location as the insurgency can be a factor for leveraging with the government (Boyle and Englebert 2006, 38). These resources can be used to bargain with the central government to obtain the means to achieve political objectives even if they may be controlled and exploited by the government until a change is made.

The insurgency's will is the last factor but is just as important as any other factor to this model (Boyle and Englebert 2006, 19; Spencer 1998, 22). The group must have this factor to execute and endure the insurgency in the long run. Characteristics of this factor are: the group's willingness to sacrifice, endure hardship, flexibility, amenability to changing political environments, and suffering. This factor is critical to the insurgency because a separatist insurgency will encounter challenges that test the group's will, commitment, and its resilience to withstand losses politically and militarily. The group's ability to stomach defeat and ensure continuity is important to maintain the insurgency. There will also be cases where communities and their leaders must be willing to pay a substantial price in human life for their demands (Boyle and Englebert 2006, 19). For example, Chechnya's independence insurgency following the collapse of the Soviet Union led to civil war "costing 80,000 to 120,000 lives" (Spencer 1998, 22). There must be a balance between loss aversion to ensure survival of the group and necessary losses to

achieve political and military objectives. A group's ability to harness this capacity is one strong determinant of its success over the long run.
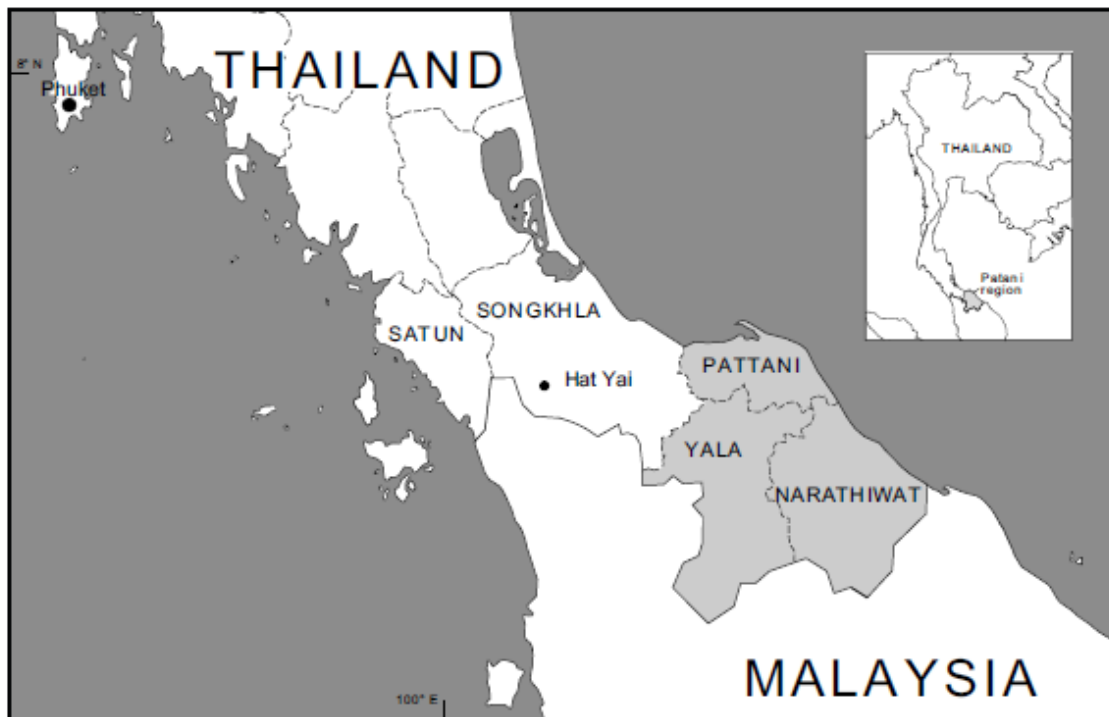
A successful separatist insurgency encompasses and integrates relative aspects of these four factors. All factors are key indicators to a successful insurgency. Integration of all four factors is critical to leveraging power against the government. Only by being recognized by the separatist population as a legitimate organization that possesses the means to threaten and influence public as well as international opinion to pressure the government, can these insurgencies be successful. The separatist population believes this organization is legitimate because it can achieve their political ambitions. By themselves, these factors can be facets of any movement and cannot amount to an effective insurgency toward achieving success. Each insurgency is regionally different and may require adjustments to fit its needs and conditions but ultimately these components are necessary in some fashion to attain success.

This model will help establish a baseline for comparison and contrast between the Thai Malays in chapter 4 and the Moros Muslims in chapter 5. The separatist model will also determine which insurgency most aligns with these four factors required for success of identity, resentment, mobilization, and will.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS ON SOUTHERN

THAILAND MALAY MUSLIMS

Map of the Patani region of Thailand, showing neighbouring provinces with majority Malay Muslim populations

Figure 2.   Patani Region

Source: Neil J. Melvin, *Conflict in Southern Thailand: Islam, Violence and the State in the Patani Insurgency* (Bromma, Sweden: CM Gruppen, 2007), V.

This chapter will be focused on the application of the separatist model from the previous chapter to the Malay Muslim insurgency, to provide contrast and comparison

between the Muslim struggles in southern Thailand and the Philippines as well as to address the secondary research questions. The corrected name for the Muslim group examined in this chapter is Malay which is different from Thai Malays. The key point of the chapter is to discuss the Malay Muslims of southern Thailand through the model's factors of identity, resentment, mobilization, and will. The questions addressed here include some initial answers to the thesis about why the southern Malay Muslims are unsuccessful so far as separatists, what international factors are necessary for their success, and how well organized are they to achieve success.

The Malay Muslim insurgency of southern Thailand possesses a unique group identity. The group consists of a polarized populace sharing three commonalities that separates them from the Thai population: Malay ethnicity, Muslim religion, and Patani historical identity (McCargo 2008, 4). The Malay people also share a culture and language, and are territorially concentrated in the deep southern Thai provinces of Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat (Rahimmula 2004, 55; Liow 2006, 25). Professor Liow believes the Malay resistance remains "insular [and] based exclusively on Malay identity" (Liow 2006, 26). Furthermore, their identity is clarified by Imtiyaz Yusuf, the Religion Department Head at Assumption University in Bangkok, Thailand correcting the name for the group in this insurgency:

> In Thailand, there are two types of Muslims: 'assimilated and unassimilated.' The assimilated are ethnic groups of Muslim Siamese, Thai-Malays, Haw Chinese, Bengalis, Arabs, Pathans, Punjabis, and Samsams. The unassimilated are known as the Malay who resides in the deep southern provinces of Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat. (Yusuf 2007, 4)

According to Yusuf the reason for this is their strict "adherence to ethnicized religious identity and attachment to concepts of *nayu* (race), *baso* language and *agama* (Islam)"

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(Yusuf 2007, 4). Based on this clarification, the Malay Muslims will be addressed by their correct name throughout the rest of the study. The Malay's identity is tied to their religion. Yusuf believes, in Thailand, "religion functions along ethnic lines; a Malay is a Muslim, a Thai is a Buddhist, and a Chinese either a Christian or Taoist (Buddhist) syncretic. Thus ethnoreligious constructs shape identities" (Yusuf 2007, 3-4). Malays of southern Thailand perceive their identity in ethnic and religious terms. It is a matter of fact that they place strong emphasis on the ethnic aspect of their adherence to the religion of Islam. The Malays of the South give primacy to their ethnic identity and view their life experience from within the context of the local practice of the agama of Islam. Thus the ritual, mythic (narrative), experiential (emotional), ethical and legal, social, material, and political dimensions of life are all interpreted and perceived through the lenses of ethnic identity. With such a perspective, ethnicity is the defining characteristic of a group's identity, which sets it apart from others in its own and other's eyes (Yusuf 2007, 8). They do not see themselves as Thai nor accept the concept of being part of a national identity. Yusuf describes them as:

> [U]nassimilated Muslims of the South who contest this concept of national identity by pressing on the difference of ethnicity, language, and religion. The reason being that traditionally, ethnicity, language, and religion have served as important determinants of identity, whereby to be a Malay means to be Muslim only, just as being a Thai means being Buddhist only (Yusuf 2007, 4).

The Malays of southern Thailand are in Yusuf's description "entrenched in traditional construction rejecting the legitimacy of the secularized Buddhist polity . . . leading . . . to their demand for recognition of language, religion and culture by majority polity" (Yusuf 2007, 5). They view national integration as threatening their own cultural disintegration (Yusuf 2007, 8). They also "recoil from outsiders (even other Muslims) unless they are

members of the same ethnic group or speak the Melayu language, one has to "*masuk*

Melayu"-become a Malay to be accepted as a Muslim" (Yusuf 2007, 9). Yusuf believes

southern Muslims have a different lifestyle and beliefs from that of Muslims in the other

parts of the country. They are suspicious of outsiders due to their history and view other

Muslims in other parts of Thailand as "insufficiently devout and too deeply insinuated

into Thai society (McCargo 2008, 5). For example, identity, nationalism, and history are

rooted deeply in the psyche of southern Muslims (Yusuf 2007, 9). Cultural, communal,

and identity are predominantly why the Malay insurgency exists. It is at the heart of the

struggle. According to Joseph Chinyong Liow, Assistant Professor at the Institute of

Defense and Strategic Studies in Singapore:

> [T]he historical roots of rebellion, which can be traced back to popular resistance
> to Thai rule on the part of a Malay Muslim population that sought to preserve its
> cultural and linguistic practices against assimilationist exercise of 'nation-
> building' in the face of the denial of education, economic, and employment
> opportunities to the Malay Muslim centered around demographics and history.
> Southern Thailand has 80 percent ethnic Malay and share a common religion of
> Islam. (Liow 2006, 25)

The Malay identity plays a crucial role in providing motivation for the insurgency.

The Malay Muslim resentment towards the Thai government has further enflamed

the insurgency. It may be real or not, but the Malay people have the perception that their

identity, culture, religion, and language are threatened by the Thai government. For

example, though now repealed, Thailand at one time required all Muslim children to

attend Thai primary schools and prohibited the "wearing of sarongs, the use of Malay

names and the Malay language" (Islam 1998, 443). Additionally, the government

replaced the Islamic Shariah and traditional adat laws with Siamese Law (Islam 1998,

443). The Malay elites feel oppressed by not having adequate representation in the Thai

political process. The Malay middle class are predominantly integrated into Thai working class society. However, the lower class Malays generally remains "unassimilated." Their concerns are not represented "locally" in the government. The lack of a Malay Muslim political party, high level representation, or seating in the government all deepens their resentment (McCargo 2008, 83). For instance, these perceptions were strengthened by the forced realignment of the original seven provinces into three, Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat, as well as replacing the local rulers with Thai governors (Islam 1998, 444). Furthermore, the security policies and economic corruption contributed to the situation. The overly abusive handling of security violations by the military and police further exacerbated resentment. Poor handling of difficult situations includes the Kuching Rupa hostage incident where two Buddhist teachers were taken hostage and eventually killed because of mishandling by the police and military (McCargo 2008, 130). The Deep South provinces have also experienced slower economic development than its other neighboring provinces and that of northern Malaysia (Melvin 2007, 18; Islam 1998, 452). Whether intentional or not, the Malays have ingrained in their psyche a perception that the Thai majority cannot be trusted and poses a threat to their identity, which has deepened the distrust for many generations.

The Malay Muslims' mobilization will impact the insurgency's sustainability. The Malays' primary means of recruiting is through the Islamic schools (Liow 2006, 29). These schools also have "study groups" of older students and adults which they can also leverage. These groups are also connected with the "paramilitary training in the guise of extracurricular sporting" (Liow 2006, 31). Young, impressionable, naïve, and economically challenged young men are recruited from these schools. Most of them

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joined because of their friends or got caught up in the emotions or disillusionment

(McCargo 2008, 135-137). The insurgency's decentralized nature lacks overarching

leadership or an amir or spiritual leader to play a role in their mobilization. One example

is the other schisms in the Malay community, such as the dispute between the majority

Sha'afi sect and the growing community of Wahhabis who are pushing for autonomy.

Another is the dominant insurgent group, the BRN-C, which seems unwilling to either

share power or negotiate (until recently). Additionally, many different factions in the

insurgency marginalize its mobilization efforts (Islam 1998, 453). Without a single strong

dominant organization, the insurgency has suffered the second-order impact of repeated

failures to unify, mobilize, and rally the entire Malay populace, and even less success in

gaining support from Muslims outside southern Thailand. One symptom of this as

described by Aphornsuvan:

> [A]n inherent weakness in the ethnic nationalist movement, arising from the
> existence of several aspiring elite groups such as traditional leaders and younger
> educated generations. Each group [seeking] to legitimize their elite status in the
> communities, thus constitutes a major factor contributing to factional disunity and
> weakness in the ethnic nationalist movements which developed. (Aphornsuvan
> 2004, 7)

Professor Islam from the International Islamic University in Malaysia shares a

similar opinion on the Malay's mobilization efforts, "The Patani Muslim independence

movement failed to mobilize such support either internally or externally" (Islam 1998,

454). They are politically divided by groups of moderates, Islamists, secularists, and

extremists (Islam 1998, 447). For example, though the Malays have been able to achieve

some level of mobilization, their various organizations can have a negative impact. This

impact may limit the insurgency's ability to only mobilize certain factions of the

unassimilated Malay populace. These organizations include the BRN–C, Barisan

Revolusi Nasional Kongres, Patani United Liberation Organization, *Gerakan Mujahidin Islam Patani*, and the Islamic Liberation Front of Pattani. However, the Patani United Liberation Organization, the Barisan Revolusi Nasional Kongres, and the Islamic Liberation Front of Pattani are seen as "pretenders" to the cause by some and have no local influence or structure. While BRN-C and *Gerakan Mujahidin Islam Patani* has local power to influence events through its militant wings, only the BRN-C has a political wing. These two groups realize they are not winning, but they are also not losing, which, in an insurgency, is often enough. In achieving their short-term objectives they have made the region ungovernable, planted distrust between the populace and the state, neutralized political rivals in the Muslim community, and have begun to force their constituents away from the secular institutions of the Thai state (Abuza 2011, 20).

Even though the insurgent Malays have some tangible and intangible support linkages, they do not have enough of what is needed for a complete mobilization. These support connections were established by the old separatist group. They established international support connections with countries such as Egypt, Syria, and Malaysia (Liow 2006, 44). However, the new militant groups do not have the same support and are connected to the old group only by history but not through any form of structure (McCargo 2008, 173).

Some Thai government regimes have promised soft power to try to diffuse the conflict but so far the Malays have yet to see that come to fruition. Though the Malays were able to attain some level of support from Malaysia, they were not as effective in reaching out and expanding to the Malay populace in Malaysia to gain greater popular support and recognition of their struggle. A neighboring country's support is a key

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ingredient and influencing factor to an insurgent cause (Boyle and Englebert 2006, 14).

Additionally, the predominant Muslim Wadah political group tried to win political

support for Malays through the Thai political system but failed to secure a ministerial seat

in the government (McCargo 2008, 71). The Malays also tried to politically align

themselves with Thai political parties that were sympathetic to their cause (Yusuf 2007,

16). However, internal party politicking within these groups only further diluted the

Malays' interests and made no political impact for their cause. There were other means of

support to the insurgency; though it may be minimal. Even though the Malays do not

require much tangible support to maintain their insurgency, some economic support is

available from the region's rubber and natural resources. However due to corruption and

distance from Bangkok, even this economic development plan has minimal benefit to the

Malays in the south.

International reaction is a significant factor to their mobilization. Its response or

the lack of it towards the violence in southern Thailand plays a crucial role in the

insurgency strategy and the Thai government's policy. The insurgency does not have

enough international support to influence the Thai government in their favor. The lack of

strong international response illustrates to the Malays that they don't have a strong

sympathetic international audience. At the same time, it also says that the Thai

government can get away with human rights abuses and the world will not say anything.

Regionally, the Malaysian government never considered fighting Thailand; however, it

did give some tacit support to the Malay Muslims. Despite its ethnic and religious

sympathies for the Malays, Malaysia has national interests that are more important than

supporting the insurgency (Islam 1998, 454). Other external groups are also not able to

offer much support. The Indonesian terrorist group *Jemaah Islamiyah* does not yet hold influence in Thailand. The MILF in the Philippines is preoccupied and unable to assist. Al Qaeda has not yet had any presence in southern Thailand. In author Abuza's opinion, "no one else in the region would gain from supporting the insurgents" (Abuza 2011, 27).

The insurgency lacked an institutionalized system for resource support to expand its political aspirations that can sustain its mobilization. Though the various Malay organizations received some level of tangible and intangible support from external sources, the Malays do not have a unified and consolidated system to harness this support and channel it to other functions for furthering their political cause. However, some funding is provided to private Malay educational institutions from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Pakistan (Chalk 2008, 13). They also have some support at the local village levels as well as through criminal activity. There is not enough known about the depth of these organizations to find their capabilities to conduct other political operations. Additionally, there is too much ambiguity into which of these organizations are legitimate. Furthermore, there are unclear lines of support to this insurgency due to the lack of groups claiming responsibility for attacks (Bajoria and Zissis 2008, 5).

The Malay Muslims' insurgency possesses—will—that maintained the insurgency in southern Thailand over the past four decades. The groups inside the insurgency are averse to a heavy loss of life. They cannot afford to do so; their survival is dependent on it. At the same time, some Malay groups demonstrated their willingness to make necessary sacrifices through their militant actions. The insurgency has endured the government's oppression and hardship for many decades. The Malays appear to be flexible as needed to the changing Thai government instability. They have also

collectively withstood much suffering and humiliation such as the Krue-Se Mosque and Tak Bai incidents. The Thai authorities may have resolved these individual incidents but lost the overall COIN battle for Malay acceptance of their legitimacy. This factor is critical to the movement because a separatist insurgency will encounter challenges that test the group's will and its resilience to withstand losses politically and militarily. The group's ability to stomach defeat, survive, and ensure continuity is important to maintain the movement.

Examining the secondary research questions will assist in answering the main objective for this paper. The first secondary question is about why the southern Malay Muslims are unsuccessful. Some factors that contributed to their failures include internal disagreements, inability to unite their different factions into one organization, and factionalized groups. They differed in their orientation from the traditional aristocrats and were also divided among themselves between Islamists and secularists. Both groups believe in armed conflict to achieve their political goals. Both groups functioned independently without coordination. The Thai government's policy of integration and assimilation was moderated by effective socioeconomic and political moves that have lessened support for the Malay insurgencies' more violent responses.

The second question is about how well organized they are to achieve success. The Malay Muslim insurgency has been ineffectively going on since the early 1900s with some shape or form of political and military activity but lacking complete components. The Malay Muslims were not as well organized as other separatist insurgencies such as the MILF. They did not mobilize effective support for their cause both internally and

externally. The Malay insurgency did not have a strong organization which made it difficult to galvanize support of the Malay Muslims.

Even though the Malay Muslim insurgency had potential for success in this model, perhaps even more so than the MILF, it does not. The Malay Muslim insurgency seemed to have had more advantages and favorable conditions but due to a multitude of factors it failed to capitalize on those opportunities. As the insurgency evolves with the addition of new groups, a different and uncertain dynamic variation is introduced. All key players involved in the conflict are trying to ascertain what these militant groups are. The operational environment has changed as a result. However, many of those involved are still holding onto the same mindset and views of the old historical insurgency, further reducing resolution of this conflict.

CHAPTER 5

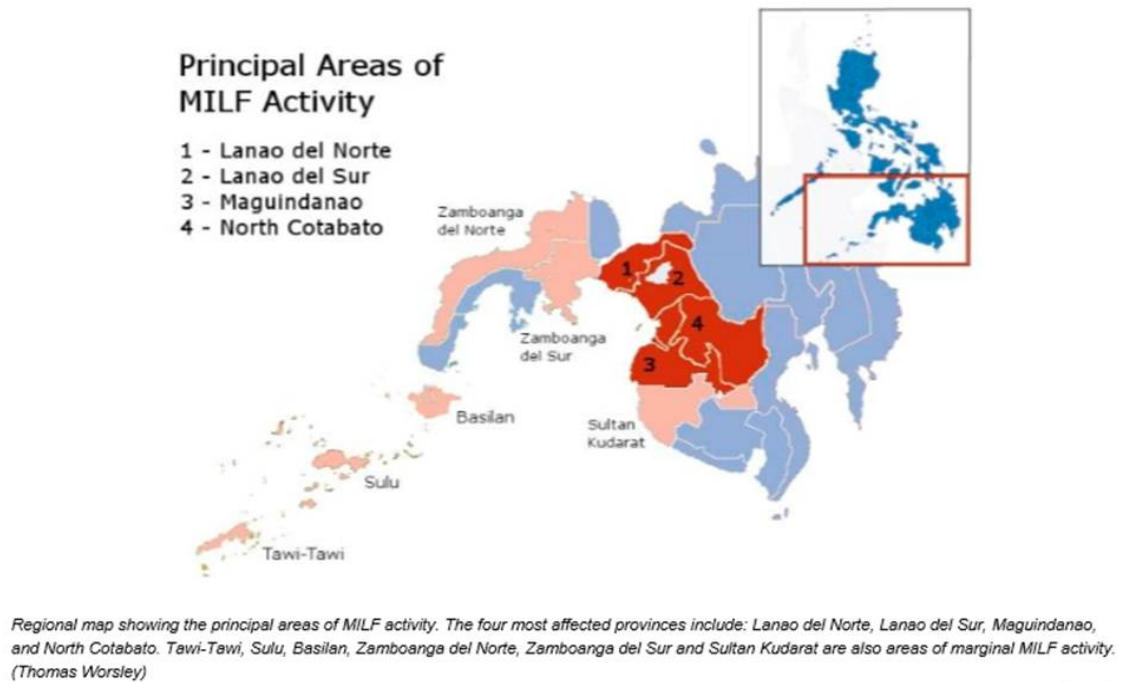FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS ON MORO

ISLAMIC LIBERATION FRONT

Figure 3.   Moro Islamic Liberation Front Areas

Source: IHS Jane's, "Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)," *Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism*, October 16, 2012, http://www.janes.com/products/janes/security/ terrorism-insurgency-intelligence-centre/world.aspx (accessed June 7, 2013), 4.

In this chapter, the separatist model in chapter 3 is applied to the MILF

insurgency to provide contrast and comparison between the Muslim insurgencies in

southern Thailand and southern Philippines, as well as address the secondary research

questions. The focus for this chapter is on the MILF of the southern Philippines

discussing its movement through the model's factors of identity, resentment, mobilization, and will. The questions addressed here with some initial answers to the thesis are: why is the MILF successful, what international factors are necessary for success, and how well organized are they to achieve success?

Unlike the Malay Muslim insurgency in southern Thailand, the Moro insurgency completed one full cycle of the separatist model and is currently on its second iteration with the MILF. The MNLF, its predecessor, sufficiently met the four factors required for successful separatist movement and completed one cycle culminating with a peace settlement in September 1996, in which MNLF Chairman Nur Misuari came to power as overseer of the four provinces of the ARMM (IHS Jane's 2012, 29). The MILF splintered from MNLF in disagreement with the settlement and demanded complete independence and the establishment of an Islamic state in Mindanao. This began the second sequence of the separatist cycle. The MILF are following the same cycle the MNLF went through with the Philippine government.

The first factor in this cycle deals with identity. The Moros are a geographically concentrated minority with a common religion, language, culture, and identity. In Mindanao, many in the populace have cross-cutting relationships, including Muslims, non-Muslim indigenous peoples, secularists and non-secularists (Liow 2006, 9). However, it also seems the MILF is a polarized section of the Muslim populace. They differ from other Moro groups because of their firm non-secular belief. The majority of their people apparently seem to share one political agenda. This orientation has earned them an "ethno-nationalist insurgency, fighting for self-government of the Bangsamoro people, not against unbelievers and persecutors of Muslims worldwide" (ICG 2008, 3).

Their insurgency narrative has Islam as the focal point of their identity and consciousness which the political community centers on as the foundation for their struggle (Liow 2006, 13). The MILF's defined identity helped shaped its insurgency and contributed to its evolution through the separatist model.

The second factor of the cycle is resentment. The primary grievances the MILF has with the Filipino government are: expropriation of Muslim lands for resettlement projects and plantation agriculture, integration and assimilation of the Moros, exploitation of Muslim natural and mineral resources for the benefit of the northern Philippines (Islam 1998, 448; Liow 2006, 7; Islam 1998, 452; IHS Jane's 2012, 8). The Moros perceived they were marginalized by the Spanish, American, and Filipino governments (Liow 2006, 8). Additionally, their frustrations with the government's discriminatory and oppressive policies combined with the perception of threat to their culture and identity led to the insurgency. Though land and other policies initiated grievances for the movement, their biggest grievance may be their differences with the Philippine majority.

The third factor of the cycle is mobilization. The MILF successfully mobilized its people. The Moro movement was able to successfully mobilize mass support both internally and externally (Islam 1998, 451). Even a MILF official believed its organization could not survive without "external support" (Liow 2006, 18). Whether it is tangible or intangible, this factor is crucial to gaining non-lethal intangible means such as popularity, political, or even social support. Some examples of support the MILF received included seven areas: financial, political, military, economic, educational, religious, and social. They had support from internal and external sources encompassing all seven realms in some shape or form. The MILF benefited from educational teachings,

military assistance from other countries, and political support from outside organizations and countries such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference and other countries of the same religion.

Internally, the MILF became popular amongst the local people. They were organized, and the Moro populace gave wholehearted support. Secondly, they attracted the attention of its strong neighbor, Malaysia, as well as other Muslim countries. The movement developed a cordial relationship with Malaysia which led to the Malaysian government's intervention to pressure the Philippine government to negotiate with the Muslim movement (Islam 1998, 455). Another factor that heavily weighed on the Philippine government was the fact that large numbers of Filipinos were employed in Malaysia and remittances contributed to the Philippine economy (Islam 1998, 455).

The organization has a command and control structure as well as a hierarchy for implementing operations. This includes six standing committees of Information, Intelligence, *Dawah* (proselytization), Foreign Affairs, Education, and Finance. They have a three branched governing structure similar to that of many countries, namely the executive, legislative, and judiciary. The executive consists of the Central Committee and the Jihad Executive Council (IHS Jane's 2012, 15). The Secretariat runs the day to day affairs of the Central Committee. There are three vice-chairmen for military affairs who are in charge of the military wing [Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces], internal affairs, and political affairs who serve underneath him (IHS Jane's 2012, 16). The legislative branch, the *Majlis al-Shura*, founded in 1991 provides consultation to the ruling body of the MILF and represents the *ulamas* (Muslim clergy) and different sectors of society (IHS Jane's 2012, 16). The judicial branch is the Supreme Islamic Court. This system has

a three tiered judiciary branch of the MILF and handles criminal and civil cases. Though the organization still faces challenges with rogue actors, MILF leadership is still in control of the organization (IHS Jane's 2012, 16). Though it may have many sub-organizations, their common goal seems to outweigh their differences.

The Moros are territorially concentrated sharing many commonalities which made it easier to mobilize along ethnic lines. Such influencing and recruiting requires minimal, if any, convincing or coercion. They also have internal capability to arm themselves. The MILF has about 11,000 to 12,000 combatants with slightly over 9,000 firearms, with the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces strength at some 15,000 personnel (IHS Jane's 2012, 15). MILF claims to have six divisions of roughly 20,000 members. Their strength of numbers highlights their capability to mobilize. Nevertheless, the group's extensive grassroots support means that the reservoir of potential fighters remains very large, although not everyone joins exclusively for religious or ethnic purposes. According to Ishak Mastura, a senior official in the ARMM government, interviewed by Jane's. "Some young people have no option but join the movement. To them, it is often the only job available in the area" (IHS Jane's 2012, 15). The Armed Forces of the Philippines also share this assessment that the MILF could easily mobilize an additional 8,000 to 10,000 fighters if required. They have also mobilized other units like the Bangsamoro Internal Security Force, MILF's police service (IHS Jane's 2012, 15). Key leaders of the organization include Ghazali Jaafar, vice-chairman for political affairs; Mohagher Iqbal, MILF's chief peace negotiator; Von Al-Haq, chair of MILF's Coordinating Committee on Cessation of Hostilities and head of MILF intelligence; Jun Mantawil, the Peace Panel Secretariat; and Muhammad Ameen, the Central Committee's Secretariat (IHS Jane's

2012, 22). These entities further legitimize their cause in the eyes of the Moros, fellow

Muslims, and the international community. MILF are able to further mobilize

organizations for youth, the *ulema* (Muslim clergy), and women to establish a political

parallel government structure (IHS Jane's 2012, 18). These key leaders within MILF

oversee the shadow government structure of the MILF, appoint local political leaders and

liaise with a number of front organizations. The Central Committee's *Dawah*

(missionary) committee runs religious affairs, and *sharia* or Islamic law is implemented

by the Bangsamoro Internal Security Force. MILF has also been able to garner economic

mobilization such as the Bangsamoro Development Agency, the economic development

arm of the MILF run by the Bangasmoro Development Council (IHS Jane's 2012, 18).

This superstructure of organizations made MILF a key player through its numbers,

recruiting, and power base expansion. Its people clearly know and support the movement

to survive, grow, and defeat government COIN operations over the long-term.

The MILF is well funded. According to Jane's it receives roughly 20 percent from

illegal activity and 80 percent comes from "other sources" such as donations (IHS Jane's

2012, 19). These funds come from foreign Islamist religious groups, charities and other

forms of non-governmental organizations. These funds also include development projects

sponsored by international donors and implemented by the MILF's Bangsamoro

Development Agency or the numerous non-governmental organizations linked to the

group. Many of these major donors' indirect contributions include the European Union

with roughly more than $12.8 million USD (United States Dollars) in Mindanao for

development and the World Bank's Mindanao Trust Fund for Reconstruction and

Development. A large amount of the money is externally from "sympathizers" in Europe

and Australia, and derived from legal channels to support social, religious, and educational programs. A large amount of money comes from the United Arab Emirates via a bank in New York. Additionally, MILF runs a number of front companies and leases out logging and mining concessions. Many MILF leaders have business ventures, and the group also engages in protection rackets. MILF also relies heavily on contributions from the Bangsamoro diaspora community in Sabah, Malaysia, and the Middle East (IHS Jane's 2012, 19).

Other resources that the MILF leverages are natural resources, weapons, and people. They are the regional land owners who exploit its natural resources. Weapons ownership is woven into the fabric of Moro culture and MILF can easily augment its arsenal in time of war. MILF also exploited networks with other Islamic organizations for weapons from the Middle East. It has also received weapons donations from Vietnam, Malaysia, and North Korea (IHS Jane's 2012, 20). The Moros are also a group that is well connected with others that share similar views. This significant element supplies it their most important resource of power.

The fourth factor of the cycle is—will. The Moros have maintained the insurgency for over four decades. They have sacrificed, suffered, and endured much in pursuit of their political ambitions. The willingness of the Moros to engage in this persistent, and at times virulent, conflict with the Philippine government; as well as encounter challenges, tested the group's will and its resilience to withstand losses. The group's ability to survive and maintain hierarchal continuity demonstrates the strength of the movement. The Moros' strong morale and determined willingness significantly contributed to the insurgency.

A thorough application of the separatist cycle model to the MILF case answers the first secondary research question as well as determines the main objective for this paper: why the MILF is successful. From earlier chapters, success was defined as not necessarily achieving independence, gaining statehood, or autonomy but rather protecting self-identity, culture, language, and religion. This ambitious endstate of independence may be a stated goal for the Mindanao Muslims but ultimately they are willing to accept terms less than that so long as their identity, religion, language, and culture are safeguarded and they share in political power and control of their resources. The Moros movement has been relatively successful because it has been able to influence the Philippine government into negotiations (Islam 1998, 451). It has also achieved semi-regional autonomy from the Tripoli Agreement and the revised Manila October 15 Sub-state Agreement (Islam 1998, 449; IHS Jane's 2012, 10). Professor Islam believes that the Moros' "severe socioeconomic and political deprivations" directly contributed to their organization's success (Islam 1998, 455). Additionally, they were led by a strong organization, capable of sustaining the group's momentum from one generation to another and achieving both "domestic and foreign support" (Islam 1998, 455).

The second question is: What international factors are necessary for success? The MILF also benefited from the ground work and achievements made by the MNLF. The Moros had support from several external organizations. The Organization of the Islamic Conference, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation with members including Libya, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, and Somalia, visiting and supporting them. Their recognition lead to the Tripoli Agreement signed on December 23, 1976, which helped create an autonomous region in Mindanao consisting of 13 provinces and nine cities. Muslim

countries consequently came forward with direct help for the Moros. The MNLF was given formal recognition by the Organization of the Islamic Conference (Islam 1998, 455). Externally, the Moros obtained support from the international community, the United Nations, and Amnesty International. Muslim countries and organizations also helped the Moros directly. According to Dr. Islam, these "countries urged the Philippine government to negotiate with the MNLF's representatives; Manila could not ignore this request because 80% of the country's oil, as well as a huge amount of foreign exchange from Filipino overseas workers, came from the Middle East" (Islam 1998, 455). A delegation of four foreign ministers from Libya, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, and Somalia visited the Philippines to discuss the situation of the Muslims there with the Marcos government. This contributed in the MNLF reducing its demand for complete independence to autonomy. The MILF was also a beneficiary of the 1996 peace accord between the government and the MNLF (IHS Jane's 2012, 3).

The third secondary question is: How well organized is the MILF to achieve success? The political make up and landscape of the Philippines is diverse and very dichotomous. Many parties with different agendas and means to pursue them litter the Luzon political arena. The major Islamic insurgent groups in the southern Philippines are Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement, a breakaway group of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Abu Sayyaf Group, *Jemaah Islamiyah*, Rajah Sulaiman Movement, Misuari Renegade—Breakaway Group, and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters. Of all these groups, the MILF is currently the most dominant and most influential. These groups' inability to unite for a common purpose contributed to the long struggle of the Muslims of southern Philippines.

The Philippine government initially saw the MILF as a radical splinter of the MNLF, and focused on both its military and diplomatic efforts. The MILF grew steadily, particularly through its control of the mosques in central Mindanao. It doubled in size when 5,000 to 6,000 MNLF combatants rejected the 1996 peace accord and joined the MILF. By 1999 to 2000, the MILF controlled vast swathes of central Mindanao, where it established Islamic based governing structures (IHS Jane's 2012, 2). The Moro movement successfully mobilized mass support both at home and abroad. It is the most well organized group. Though MILF has rogue belligerents, the Philippine government still pursues negotiations with the MILF (IHS Jane's 2012, 2). Nonetheless, strong organization has always provided a cohesive force in the Moro liberation movement.

The Moro insurgency repeated the separatist cycle a second time but will probably settle for much less than independence. Like the majority of ethnic movements, what is publicly stated and what is feasibly achievable are not the same. These movements usually will settle for whatever ensures the protection of their culture, identity, language, and religion. They realize it is critical to avoid significant personnel losses since people are their most valuable resource. Having a strong and large population base is critical to maintaining power. Most of these organizations are successful because they are also flexible to adapt to their environment. The model provides for an overarching base of necessary factors for a successful separatist movement. These factors point out significant differences and similarities between this Moro movement and the next one in southern Thailand. They also indicate what factors work for one movement vice another and which did not work, as well as its effectiveness and why not.

The MILF is one organization that illustrates the model's factors. Like the MNLF before it, it has negotiated with the Philippine government for peace short of full independence or autonomy, settling for a legal sub-state status (IHS Jane's 2012, 10). At the end of the day, it is symptomatic of human nature. The leadership and its people are getting old and tired of fighting. The founding leader Salamat Hashim passed away in 2003. The Moros want to keep or attain something even if it is short of their ultimate goal. Whatever that something is, it is at least something they can pass on to future generations.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

This study has produced a model containing four factors that were derived from two primary sources and other materials. The two primary sources are Metta Spencer's *Separatism: Democracy and Disintegration* and Katharine Boyle and Pierre Englebert's *The Primacy of Politics in Separatist Dynamics*. Other key influences are Ted Robert Gurr's *Minorities at Risk*, Duncan McCargo's *Tearing Apart the Land*, David Galula's *Counterinsurgency Warfare* and Moshe Yegar's *Between Integration and Secession: The Muslim Communities of the Southern Philippines, Southern Thailand, and Western Burma/Myanmar*. These sources provided predominant insights and trends for historical insurgencies that have been successful in producing this model.

The four factors are the answer to the primary research question: what current factors determine a successful separatist insurgency? They are identity, resentment, mobilization, and will. They should be indicative of the likelihood of success. Success in a separatist insurgency is obtaining institutionalized protection or autonomy; anything less than independence. However, even if they are all present in a separatist insurgency it may not necessarily lead directly to achieving success or political aspirations. In addition, these four factors may not be sufficient for all insurgencies to incorporate. They may need other factors tailored to their type of conflict and area. These other factors may significantly influence the outcome including economic conditions, external stakeholders, and key individuals in the country. On the other hand, some insurgencies may possess all the factors as well as sophisticated support structures, but they may not achieve their

objectives. The separatist model points out possible patterns for success but is still challenged by the complexities of human dynamics involved in these types of conflicts.

The model's four factors was then applied to two separatist insurgencies, the Malay Muslims in southern Thailand and the Moros of the southern Philippines. These two insurgencies have several similarities and some very distinct differences. The similarities are that both share a common religion, concentrated geographically in their respective areas where they are natives, and they are an ethnic minority as part of a major ethnic group. Their persisting grievances and pursuits of self determination include disputes over ancestral land, socio-economic opportunities, and exclusion from participation in the political processes and lack of recognition by the state. Consequently, some members within these Muslim minority groups feel threatened and may take up arms against the state. They both share longstanding sociopolitical grievances and economic marginalization as well as victimization (Liow 2006, 7). Both groups also rely on international support, whether tangible or intangible. These two groups share much in common but the differences between them are significant.

These two insurgencies have many more differences than they do similarities. In Thailand, it appears that the "identity of the separatists remains unclear" which has contributed to serious problems in negotiations and COIN operations by the Thai government. The MILF, on the other hand, is the highly organized regional counter-state in Mindanao. This difference is clearly demonstrated in the widely different conflict resolution processes for the two groups. In Thailand, several groups have attempted to communicate sketchy demands to local Malay Muslim community leaders, but no group has emerged to claim responsibility which indicates decentralized and disparate

provocations. Though the BRN-C seems to be the most influential group in the Malay Muslim insurgency, there is not one group that speaks for all other groups and interests (Liow 2006, 42). However, with the MILF, the Philippine government has engaged in negotiations. Furthermore, Thailand has no systematic and sustained articulation of the Islamic blueprint for separatism. The Malay Muslim insurgency is exclusive (polarized) while the Moros acceded to non-Muslims (cross cutting) (Liow 2006, 26). The southern Thai conflict is organized around ethnic while the Moros is religious oriented. They also have no institution of mass support. Conversely, the Moros stress importance of education and proselytization (Liow 2006, 16). The Malay education system is under the purview of central government while the MILF system is not. Additionally, there is no strict student indoctrination for Malay students (Liow 2006, 33). These two groups' differences highlight the important role of critical factors and distinguish the MILF insurgency from the Malay Muslim insurgency.

The first case study of the Malay Muslims in southern Thailand demonstrates that the factors are valid but point out that their insurgency may not lead to success. The model's factors possess sufficient agility to describe this unique type of conflict in southern Thailand; however, their insurgency is ineffective in utilizing them. The factors point out, with some accuracy, the Malays ambiguous political situation and group dynamic. Furthermore, the model categorized generally the vagueness and variations of the Malay insurgency. Even though the insurgency did not have any of these factors sufficiently, the Malay Muslims still obtained a signed agreement for the two sides to hold talks hosted by Malaysia (Sithrapthran and Grudgings 2013, 1). The southern Thailand case study illustrates the model's brittleness.

The second case study of the MILF in southern Philippine demonstrates that the factors are valid and indicates that their insurgency lead to success. The MILF's insurgency possesses sufficiently the four factors. The factors were more consistent with the MILF's insurgency. The factors more accurately described the MILF's organization. These factors may explain their success of reaching a settlement based on greater autonomy in Mindanao rather than full independence, but would continue to pursue its goal of secession through peaceful and legal political means. This case verifies that these factors may indicate success when instituted in an insurgency.

Both case studies together demonstrate, that possessing some or all of separatist model factors cannot guarantee success. They are only general indicators based on historically successful insurgencies. The composition of the group and the environment involved in an insurgency is unique and therefore these factors may or may not be applicable. Merely recognizing four factors does not suffice for these types of separatist groups. There is a missing critical element. In studying ethnic separatist insurgencies, it is important to understand the complete story—not just who they are and why they turn to violence, but how they define who they are and utilize this notion of membership and identity to mobilize towards political goals. This model's four factors have been shown to provide some current trends of insight into separatist insurgent groups in Southeast Asia.

Further study is recommended into exploring other factors. There are many other complexities and factors such as economics that could potentially help refine these types of conflicts. Additionally, more current research is needed into these two conflicts. Both conflicts are evolving and changing with new people.

GLOSSARY

Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). Mindanao island group composed predominantly of Muslim provinces: Basilan, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi.

Bangsa. Malay term for nation. Moro Muslim adopted prefix to link with their identity forming a new nation called Bangsamoro land.

Bangsamoro Internal Security Force (BISF). The MILF's police service.

Bangsamoro Development Agency (BDA). MILF's economic development arm.

Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement (BIFM). A breakaway group of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Cross cutting. Collective of people or groups that share a common goal or purpose consisting of different beliefs, identity, and background.

Ethnie. A collective of members sharing common traits such as language, religion, customs, institutions, laws, folklore, architecture, dress, food, music and arts, and color.

Insurgency. An organized, protracted politico-military struggle designed to weaken the control and legitimacy of an established government, occupying power, or other political authority while increasing insurgent control.

Insurgent. People and groups actively battling the government.

Malay Muslim (Thai Malays). Muslims geographically concentrated in deep southern provinces of Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat, Thailand.

Militant. Group that uses violence or military means to achieve political objectives.

Mindanao. Second largest and easternmost island in the Philippines; only area of the Philippines with a significant Muslim presence.

Moro. Indigenous Muslims in southern Philippines. Spanish label given to Muslim resistors from southern islands of Mindanao.

Movement. A passive or active political organization aimed at obtaining insurgent political goals.

Polarized. Ethnic group with sharing common identity, belief, language, culture, and religion.

Ressentiment. It is the French word for "resentment" (fr. Latin intensive prefix 're', and 'sentir' "to feel"). Ressentiment is a sense of hostility directed at that which one identifies as the cause of one's frustration, that is, an assignment of blame for one's frustration. The sense of weakness or inferiority and perhaps jealousy in the face of the "cause" generates a rejecting/justifying value system, or morality, which attacks or denies the perceived source of one's frustration. The ego creates an enemy in order to insulate itself from culpability.

Terrorist. A person who uses terrorism in the pursuit of political aims.

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